

1. Study VC "governmental" operations; what are their vulnerabilities?
e.g., a) How could their system of taxation be disrupted?
What method of extortion do they use? How could businessmen,
etc., be dissuaded from cooperating? What do VC use money for?
(Deitchman? suggestion: control distribution of medical
supplies; make it impossible for VC to buy openly.)
(J-2 study, March '64?)

b) Possibilities for penetrating VC infrastructure.

c) Possibilities for identifying key VC~~x~~ civil-military leaders,
killing/capturing them.

→ Paragraph on this:

Increase VC desertion rate: Magsaysay-like approach to "Chieu Hoi";
treatment of prisoners.

Compete with VC for recruits: offer local duty? training? GI Bill of Rights?

Emphasize role of ethnic North Vietnamese; demonstrate VC weapons, emphasize
Chinese origin.

Black operations stressing Chinese role? (Prisoner; documents) (for use within
SVN, esp. VC territories).

Guerrilla ops creating insecurity within VC strongholds; US/Phillippine/
Australian/UK/other led? Special aim of knocking off leadership.

Deception operations: communications, planning. Counter-ambush operations.

Study: WSEG.

Negotiation ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

If US proposal for negotiation came closely associated with a major strike on NVN---it would get the notion of negotiation out in the open, without most of the worst implications.

Such a proposal would be ambiguous, under these circumstances. It might well appear totally insincere, simply intended to remove some of the sting of aggressiveness and illegality out of the US action, and possibly to reduce the probability of an immediate violent response by the DRV, Chicoms or SU. But are these interpretations bad?

They might be thought to destroy the DRV's "interest" in negotiation, by reducing the credibility of a "sincere interest" by the US in negotiation. Or would they have the opposite effect: making the US appear even more mean (we're not only bastards, but hypocritical bastards) and calculating, and making a negotiated solution ~~XXXX~~ appear preferable to the alternative of continued US attacks? Sincere or not, the proposal would be there for the other side to pick up; even if ignored at the time, it could be cashed in later; and having the other side believe that it was trapping us into negotiations we didn't really want is a good way of entering negotiations.

Some dirty possibilities at the moment (24 Feb 65)

1. Catholic despair over failure of Thao coup, anticipated Buddhist reaction to attempt, rise of Thi (?); new attempts, defeatism,...
2. Buddhist apprehension over loss of Khanh (though, compensated by rise of Thi?), Catholic attempt... Catholic-Buddhist fighting.
3. Impulsive action by Thi, either to take over government, or to split off I Corps from rest of country.
4. Other events, including further coups, that lead to open fighting between different Army units.
5. Unit withdrawals from Popular Forces, etc.
6. Denunciations of US by Buddhists for supporting Thao coup, ousting Khanh (claims that we brought over Thao, took him out, planned whole thing, etc.) Specific denunciations of Taylor, known to oppose Khanh.
7. Open calls for neutralism, peace, getting US out, etc. by Buddhists. (Tri Quang, Tam Chau). Demonstrations, immolations, in favor of this.
8. Effective mortar or other attack on Da Nang: e.g., after Marines had landed.
9. French covert activity feeding rumors aimed at getting US out (e.g., relating to US backing of Thao coup).

Negotiation

NEGOTIATION

Various actions by DRV/VC are preconditions for:

1. Opening informal, private discussions, involving GVN.
2. Opening informal, private discussions, involving US.
3. US participating in formal discussions launched by others.
4. US actively arranging formal discussions.
5. US stopping strikes against NVN.
6. US reducing troops in SVN.
7. US accepting cease-fire in SVN.
/GVN
8. US concluding a settlement with DRV.

Given the actions desired, the question arises of the observations that would serve as acceptable evidence that the actions had been taken: the "sign."

Our conditions for stopping strikes (assuming that negotiations or discussions are not regarded as precluding strikes) or reducing troops or accepting cease-fire would be stringent; and it would also be hard to find or give evidence that they had been met.

But our conditions for discussions--particularly, relatively informal, "preliminary" talks--would be less stringent; they might consist mainly of verbal indications, through private channels, of willingness to discuss, accompanied by verbal indications that the DRV/VC might find some solution short of complete achievement of their current goals as acceptable.

Current comments on the lack of a "sign" from the DRV of willingness to negotiate refers not so much to the continuing aggression within SVN as to the lack even of verbal indications of desire to talk or of willingness to modify their objectives.

If the opening of discussions or negotiations are not taken by the US automatically as a signal to stop all strikes on the DRV or to reduce operations in SVN, then the important requirement to define a "sign" refers to the latter steps.

A.

We want NVN to:

1. Stop direction of VC activities.
2. Stop materiel support of VC.
3. Stop ~~infil~~ training and infiltrating personnel.
4. Stop propaganda support of VC.
5. Use influence/control over VC to:
 - a) Stop VC attacks on ARVN/PF.
 - b) Stop VC attacks on hamlets, officials, civilians.
 - c) Stop VC sabotage, mining, attacks on transport.
 - d) Withdraw infiltrated units, Main Force units, COSVN personnel, to NVN.
 - e) Inactivate VC infrastructure.
 - f) Cease interference with GVN activities throughout SVN.
 - g) Stop VC penetration of religious, student, minority groups.

((What were details of Geneva Accords in 1954? How were arrangements for transfer of Viet Minh forces to North administered, supervised, monitored?))

B. Visible evidence of compliance:

1. Public, broadcast statements by DRV:
 - a) Renouncing aim of aiding insurgency in SVN, ^{or} unifying VN.
 - b) Repudiating Liberation Front.
 - c) Calling on VC to end activities in SVN.
 - d) Calling infiltrated "volunteers" back to NVN.
2. Ceasing coded communications to SVN, plus any open military/political direction of insurgency ~~or~~ or propaganda support.
3. Allowing ICC/neutral/UN ^{observers in Laos at Mu Kien / Nakh Phanom} ~~inspectors to witness inactivation of training camps in DRV.~~ ^{at Laos Panchai way-stations, and at 17th Parallel.}
4. Marked reduction in VC attacks and sabotage, particularly spectaculars. (e.g., to TET level or lower).
5. VC units move to NVN, witnessed by observers.

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Desired NVN "signals"

A. ~~B.~~ We require little in the way of ^{"signals"} preconditions--beyond verbal overtures, or simple willingness to participate by the DRV--for joining in informal, highly private discussions with the DRV, particularly if initiated by the DRV or by the GVN.

B. We do have preconditions, of ^{increasing} ~~varying~~ stringency, for:

- indent*
1. Engaging in overt, ~~about~~ formal discussions.
 2. Stopping strikes against NVN.
 3. Reducing troops or lowering US level of activity in SVN.
 4. Accepting a cease-fire in SVN.

Our conditions for an ^{concluding} ~~acceptable~~ settlement, ~~concluded~~ with the DRV--at least, our "going-in position"--would be still more stringent.

C. For each of these situations, we would need observable evidence--a "sign"--that the relevant conditions were being met.

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1. To engage in formal discussions, we would need at least:

a) Verbal modifying of the most extreme DRV/CC objectives (i.e., a unified VN under Hanoi);

b) Abandonment of ~~extreme~~ DRV preconditions for talks, e.g., withdrawal of US troops, or stopping of strikes against NVN ;

c) Absence of spectaculars or any marked increase in VC activity.

d) Willingness to ~~admit~~ ^{continued} admit some responsibility and support for VC activities.

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The positive measures needed could be verbal, so long as ^(the opening of discussions did) ~~standards were not~~ not preclude US operations in the north and south.

2. To stop attacks on NVN we would need evidence--not only verbal--that NVN had ceased or was markedly reducing infiltration, direction and support of VC insurgents in SVN. ~~(See B).~~

^{acceptable and}
1. Minimum observable evidence would be:

a) Ceasing coded communications to SVN or any open military-political direction or encouragement of insurgency.

b) Marked reduction in VC attacks, sabotage and terrorism (e.g., to Tet level or lower).

— Stiffer conditions would add:

- c) Acceptance of ICC/neutral/UN observers along infiltration routes: in Laos at Mu Gia/Nape Passes, at Laos Panhandle way-stations, and in DMZ, and at sea at 17th Parallel.
- d) Withdrawal to NVN, witnessed by above observers or by US/GVN observers, of VC Main Force units, infiltrated PAVN ~~units~~ personnel, and other infiltrators including infrastructure: all in significant numbers relative to current intelligence on numbers in SVN.

~~xxx~~

~~Still stiffer conditions might be set~~

- e) Public broadcast statements by DRV:
 - 1) Renouncing aim of aiding insurgency in SVN or unifying Vietnam by ~~violent~~ such means.
 - 2) Calling on VC to end

— Still stiffer conditions might be set, but might not actually be achievable by Hanoi, apart from ~~from~~ the DRV's willingness to comply:

- f) Virtual standdown ~~or cessation~~ of VC activities in SVN.
- g) Cessation of VC communications within SVN.
- h) Return to NVN of "all" infiltrated personnel.
- i) Unimpeded access of GVN forces into VC base areas; inactivation of COSVN and other VC headquarters and bases.